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THE VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT MEDIA OUTLET OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

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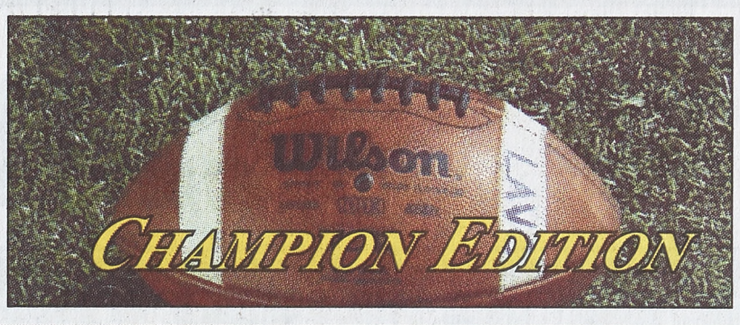


Monarchs win their second-straight tittle

PHOTOGRAPH BY/VARTAN ALAKHVERDYAN

VALLEY PREVAILS- **Valley President Erika Endrijonas hoists the Golden State Championship trophy after the Monarchs defeated Southwestern.**

BY EMIL G. CLAES AND D.R. HARWARD
STAFF WRITERS

Monarch Pride is an early holiday gift that head football coach Robert Tucker and his team gave Valley College by beating the Southwestern Panthers 24-16 at home and bringing home the CCCAA American Division Championship title.

Although the Panthers were the statistical favorites, Tucker stuck to the strategy that had been successful in their past 10 games-- a quick-scoring offense and dominating second-half defense. The offense, led by quarterback Christian Jorgenson can score instantly and without warning.

The Panthers opened on offense but were held to only 10-yards before being forced to punt.

It took the Monarchs all of 35 seconds to turn their possession into points, with Jorgensen executing two lightening-fast passes; the first for 8 yards to Chris Phillips and the second to wide receiver Ahkil Crumpton, who ran it for a 52-yard touchdown. Kicker Rodolfo Oliver added the extra point bring the score to 7-0.

The second quarter started in the Monarchs' favor as their six-play, 36-yard set-up allowed Oliver to convert a 31-yard field goal putting them up 10-0.

But, about halfway into the second quarter, Panther Isaih Strayhorn found a gap in the Monarch defense and made a 46-yard run into the end zone, bringing Southwestern back into the game.

With less than two minutes left in the half, a pass by Jorgensen was picked off by Panther JJ Dallas, a mistake that would give SouthWestern a 13-10 lead. The Panthers added an additional three points, but Monarch Ahkil Crumpton pulled off a score with a 95-yard kickoff return, giving Valley a 17-16 lead.

In the fourth quarter, Southwestern experienced the Monarchs' brutal final-quarter defense and discovered the reason why the Monarchs are the only undefeated team out of the 52 colleges in their conference. The Monarchs found the end zone three more times during the fourth quarter, but two touchdowns would be called back due to offensive penalties. The Valley defense would completely dominate the entire quarter, only allowing Southwestern a total of just 34 yards and no points.

After the Monarchs claimed victory, the entire team almost reverently took a knee as they huddled around their coach.

"Quiet down and listen up everyone," shouted Tucker, then lowering his voice he looked intensely at every single player, "I'm damn proud of every single one of you."

For his efforts, Tucker was named coach of the year and Michael Sewell, Jr. won defensive player of the year.

Tucker has led Valley to two-straight bowl titles in the last two years.

Last year, the team won the Golden State Bowl. Valley had won four-straight bowls from 1993 to 1996 before going on an 18-year drought. The college's first bowl chapionship was the Orange Show Bowl in 1955.

PHOTOGRAPH BY/VARTEN ALAKHVERDYAN

TASTY TREATS- A valley student enjoys a break at one of the new vending machines on campus.

Vending machines offer modern look

■ **Better looking and more secure vending machines finally come to Valley's campus.**

BY MELINDA HENRICKS
STAFF WRITER

The older vending machines have been replaced with new machines that have steel locking fronts to prevent vandalism, and also provide a clean stainless steel look, which better reflects the new Valley College image.

First Class Vending, the old service company is out, and a new contract with Grand G&G is in. What this translates to for students is a cup of coffee will now cost 25 cents more, the choices for sandwiches and hot food have been reduced, but new hot items are now available.

Additionally, there is now only one microwave, which is located in front of the auditorium. Therefore, if students buy something that requires heating, or you bring food from home, you will need to go to that location. There are still some hot choices, which appear to be healthier, and the vending machines will not experience outages due to vandalism, which was a constant problem before, causing the machines to be out of service, sometimes for days, a major inconvinence for students with classes after the cafeteria had closed.

Most of the vending locations have remained the same with some minor changes to better serve student traffic,and updated credit card readers allow for better service with fewer mistakes.In addition, students now have the availability to pay with Android Pay or Apple Pay.

Moreover, the new vendor hired an outside contractor to build custom security cages, which provides an up-dated clean and crisp look with uniformity throughout the campus. The steel cages are strongly reinforced and are tightly locked at night with roll down garage-type doors.

Cynthia Gomez sophomore said "The machines look nice and work better, I was tired of loosing my change." Another student, Katherine Lopez stated, "I think the new machines are great,I like the new look and the choices are better."

The central vending machines in front of the auditorium still carry emergency school supplies for times when the bookstore is closed. There are scantrons, pens, pencils, and blue testing books as well as a few other items.

Overall the new vending machines appear to be an up-grade in every way, and are a nice addition to the ambiance of Valley which reflect the new campus design and vision.

Valley officials take blame for Blackboard failure

■ **The failure of the Blackboard Connect alert system was the result of Valley College user error.**

BY D.R. HARWARD AND COURTNEY MELOCHE
STAFF

During the November lockdown of the Valley College campus, not everyone received the emergency messages, and the fault was not with Blackboard Connect.

"That's on us," said Valley President Erika Endrijonas.

The school was placed on lockdown Nov. 8 after 911 dispatch received multiple calls from people reporting they had heard gunshots near campus.

It is the responsibility of school officials to alert Blackboard of an emergency; Blackboard Connect then alerts students, faculty and staff through text messages, email and voicemail.

However, Valley did not properly inform Blackboard of the emergency. Public relations manager Jennifer Borucki missed a group containing some members of the faculty.

Endrijonas said said the problem has been resolved by creating a super-group message template.

The campus was placed on lockdown around 7 p.m. Many students left before the lockdown. Some were stuck on campus while officials cleared each building and were not released until 9:20 p.m. Those who stayed thought there was a shooter on campus before the all clear.

"We got a message on the phone and someone walked into Monarch Hall saying there were shots fired," asid student Mark Salcedo on the day of the lockdown. "It was a little scary."

The source of the 911 calls turned out to be car backfiring on Fulton Avenue.

There remain concerns about the amount of time it took for some messages to reach the intended recipients. Endrijonas said Los Angeles Community College District officials are working with Blackboard to find a solution.

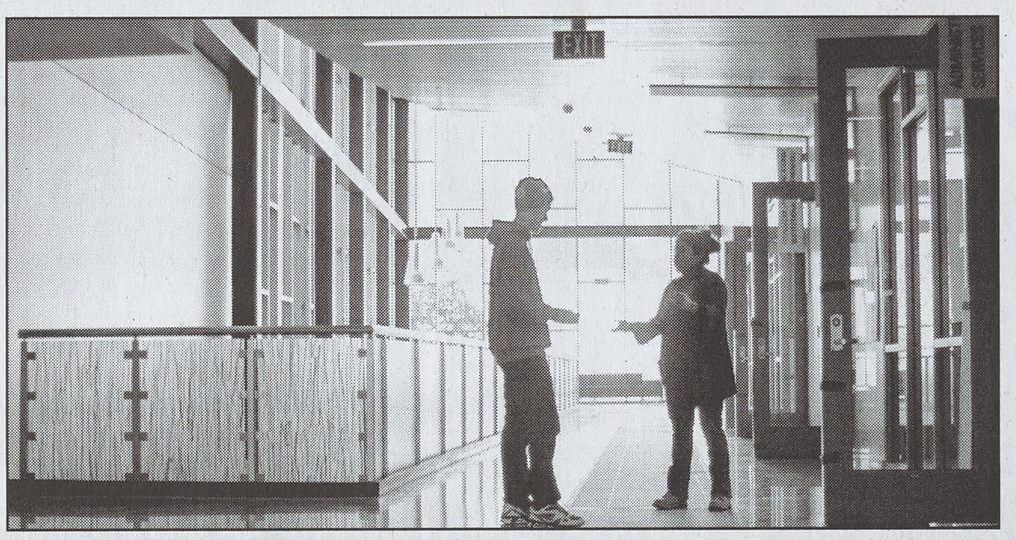
Blackboard's D'Anthony White responded Thursday by email.

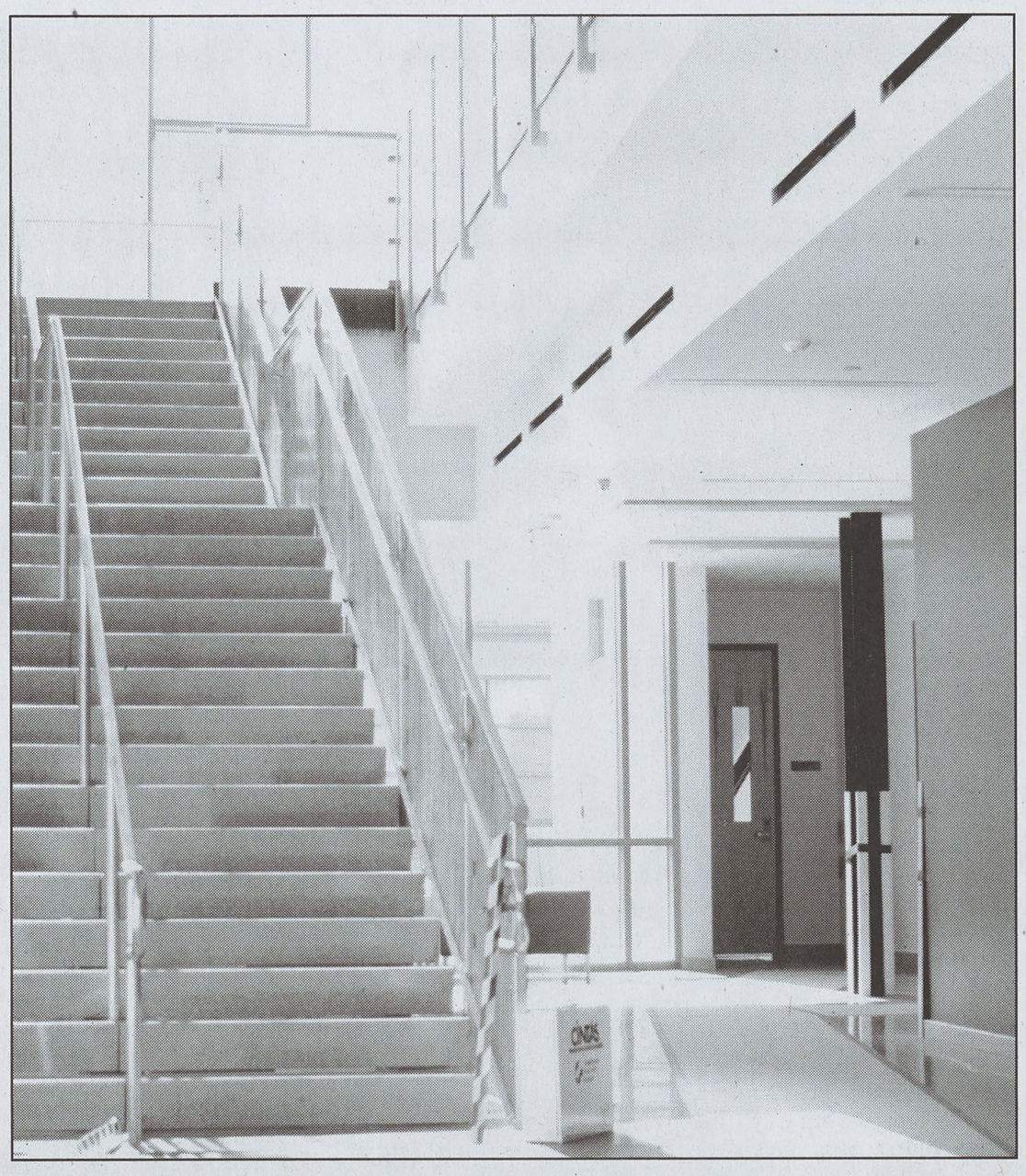
"The success of notifications can be impacted by a number of factors, including correct phone numbers and emails entered by the institution, phone hangups, and student's decision to opt-out of notifications."

Herbert Orellana, Solomon Smith and James Brisson contributed to this article.

ACA Building will open its doors in spring

■ **The Administration building is nearly complete and move-in plans have been made by several departments, including the President's Office.**





BY PAUL ROSENBUSCH
STAFF WRITER

The new 65,795 square foot Administration and Career Advancement Building project is almost complete after three years and $46.6 million, $2.2 million over the original $44.4 million budget. This new building features office space for Valley College's administrative staff, including President Erika Endrijonas' office, a Community Workforce Development Center, 13 classrooms, a conference room and the planned Omega Data center.

BuildLACCD's website states that the date of substantial completion was October 20th, 2016, which was pushed to the new date of January 30th, 2017 in the online dashboard report, with the date of occupancy on February 6, just in time for the spring semester. When the fences are removed, another green construction project built to LEED standards will be revealed to Valley students and staff, with more landscape bioswales to help mitigate rainwater and allow it to filter into the aquifer.

PHOTOS BY VARTAN ALAKHVERDYAN

Finals Schedule Fall 2016

■ **Finals begin Monday, December 12 and end Sunday, December 18, except for classes less-than-semester lenght which will have finals December 11**

DAY CLASSES

Day and Date Of Final Exam	MONDAY DEC 12			TUESDAY DEC 13		
Time of Exam	6:30am - 8:30am	9:30am - 11:30am	12:30pm - 2:30pm	6:30am - 8:30am	9:30am - 11:30am	12:30pm - 2:30pm
Normal Class Schedule	6:30 – 7:55 MW 6:45 – 7:55 MTWTh	9:40 – 10:50 MTWTh 9:40 – 11:05 MW 9:40 – 10:55 MWF 9:40 – 12:10 MW	1:00 – 2:10 MTWTh 1:00 – 2:25 MW 1:00 – 2:15 MWTh 1:00 – 3:30 MW	6:30 – 7:55 TTh	9:40 – 11:05 TTh 9:40 – 10:55 TThF 9:40 – 12:10 TTh	1:00 – 2:25 TTh 1:00 – 2:15 TThF 1:00 – 3:30 TTh

Day and Date Of Final Exam	WEDNESDAY DEC 14			THURSDAY DEC 15		
Time of Exam	8:00am - 10:00am	10:30am - 12:30pm	1:00pm - 3:00pm	8:00am - 10:00am	10:30am - 12:30pm	1:00pm - 3:00pm
Normal Class Schedule	8:15 – 9:25 MTWTh 8:00 – 9:25 MW 8:00 – 9:15	11:20 – 12:30 MTWTh 11:20 – 12:45 MW 11:20 – 12:35	2:20 – 3:30 MTWTh 2:40 – 4:05 MW	8:00 – 9:25 TTh 8:00 – 9:15 TThF 8:00 – 10:30	11:20 – 12:45 TTh 11:20 – 12:35 TThF 11:20 – 1:50	1:45 – 3:10 TTh 1:45 – 3:00 TThF

EVENING CLASSES

CLASSES MEETING AT 3 PM OR BEFORE 5 PM			CLASSES MEETING AT 5 PM OR BEFORE 6 PM			CLASSES MEETING AT OR AFTER 6 PM		
Class Meets	Exam Date	Time	Class Meets	Exam Date	Time	Class Meets	Exam Date	Time
M	M Dec 12	4 – 6pm	M	M Dec 12	4:30 – 6:30pm	M	M Dec 12	7 – 9pm
T	T Dec 13	4 – 6pm	T	T Dec 13	4:30 – 6:30pm	T	T Dec 13	7 – 9pm
W	W Dec 14	4 – 6pm	W	W Dec 14	4:30 – 6:30pm	W	W Dec 14	7 – 9pm
Th	Th Dec 15	4 – 6pm	Th	Th Dec 15	4:30 – 6:30pm	Th	Th Dec 15	7 – 9pm
MW	M Dec 12	4 – 6pm	MW	W Dec 14	4:30 – 6:30pm	MW	M Dec 12	7 – 9pm
TTh	T Dec 13	4 – 6pm	TTh	Th Dec 15	4:30 – 6:30pm	TTh	T Dec 13	7 – 9pm

In the event of a conflict, speak with your instructor to schedule an alternate time to take the final.

• Except for classes of less-than-semester length, the LAST DAY OF REGULAR INSTRUCTION Sunday December 11.

• Classes meeting less-than-semester length will have the final exams at the last meeting of the class.

• FINAL EXAMINATIONS MUST BE HELD ON THE DAY AND TIME SCHEDULED AND IN REGULARLY ASSIGNED CLASSROOMS.

• FRIDAY CLASSES will have their final during the regular class meeting DECEMBER 16.

• SATURDAY CLASSES will have their final during the regular class meeting on DECEMBER 17

VALLEY LIFE

ComplexCon debuts at Long Beach Convention Center

BY KITIANA ADAMS
STAFF WRITER

The fog rolled in, covering the anxious crowd outside of the Long Beach Convention Center on a hectic Saturday morning, waiting for the doors to open for the very first ComplexCon- a convention showcasing pop-up shops, intelligent panel discussions, urban art and much more that attracted hundreds of Complex fans.

The publication Complex collaborated with producer and songwriter Pharrell Williams and contemporary Japanese artist Takashi Murakami to bring the two day event to life. Williams held the role of being cultural director while Murakami was ComplexCon's brand identity director. With the convergence of creators, curators, and most importantly the youth, everyone was able to be a part of the celebration of pop culture.

As excited fans entered the entertainment center, they were greeted with slammin mix sounds of hip-hop and techno surrounded by moving graphics across the walls designed by Murakami. With this being the annual kick-off for Mark Ecko's online publication's highly anticipated event, clothing pop-up shops and art exhibits were still in the process of setting up, but that didn't stop attendees from rushing to each section to check out what they had to offer.

One of the exhibits that caught most of the attention when the doors opened was Mountain Dew's Camo Collective Experience- a virtual art walk-through of the history of the Cubism-influenced camouflage which allowed them to interact with a mirror equipped feature with hologram reality technology called a "CamoFlector," being virtually outfitted with custom Camo Out patterns that would be shown in a virtual music video.

While attendees thoroughly enjoyed checking out the retailing shops like Billionaire Boys Club, PUMA and A Bathing Ape, others spent time checking out cultural art pieces by contemporary artist Patrick Martinez. Martinez had a variety of expressive masterpieces that had their own story attached to them that Black and Brown communities could relate to, with one acrylic piece titled Home Grown 1. It depicted a Latina woman breast feeding her newborn a bottle of Coke with a blanket pinned on the acrylic panel, giving the viewer direct contact with the art itself. Vacancy Project, a Los Angeles art collective, showcased their vivid and colorful art section with a canvas that displayed different shades of females' buttocks overlapping one another, embracing the curves of women.

COURTESY OF COMPLEXCON

COMPLEX CON- Fans lined up in the early morning on November 5 to experience Complex's first culture festival that showcased music, clothing pop-up shops, food trucks and art.

Traveling all the way from New York, Leslie Ziano wanted to experience something fresh and new that could resonate with the urban crowd. The East Coast native made her rounds around the first floor to check out the retailers and exhibits but finally made her way upstairs to the ComplexConversations, panel discussions that included celebrities such as Jesse Williams, Ice Cube, Angie Martinez, and Tony Hawk. Some of the topics ranged from education to the manner of speaking in a digital world.

"What they're presenting is very variable, and it can change a lot if they keep doing this year from year from year," Eziano said.

With Frank Ocean's smooth tune Nights flowing through the speakers, Ryan Treader enjoyed the conversation on digital media communication as it was his first panel he had attended that day. Treader felt that this was something different and influential. Even though most of the action was downstairs with lines around the Nike shop, people emptying their pockets for merchandise from the Taylor Gang collection, and the rapper Metro Boomin hanging out with fans at the PUMA Lab, the Portland resident felt that the panels were vital.

"It's not just about the merch, We can always go

Vinyl resurgence creates difficulties

Indie artists get pushed to the bottom of the barrel as demand surpasses pressing-plant capabilities

BY COURTNEY MELOCHE
STAFF WRITER

Vinyl records have outsold digital downloads for the first time ever in the United Kingdom.

Since last year, vinyl sales are up 100% globally. Its comeback is happening in a big way.

When vinyl popularity began to decline after the introduction of CDs, many plants shut down due to lack of demand. A few remained to serve the artists who were still making limited-run records for niche audiences. Due to the complexity and specificity of the technology, very few new plants have opened over the last decade to relieve the surviving plants. Over the last year a few small start-ups have begun developing new technologies and opening small plants, but these companies are few and far between. There are not enough manufacturing plants to handle the current demand. Indie artists- the niche who kept vinyl alive- are getting pushed aside to accommodate major label orders, making it difficult to get their lower budget, limited-run products released.

Case in point: The Cherry Bluestorms.

They are an Encino-based band that has been receiving buzz on the Los Angeles live circuit as well as some radio play. They are not signed to a label and don't have agents or management to help handle their business affairs. Most of that work is done by singer Deborah Gee and her assistant.

When they received the shipment of their 7" vinyl single, "See No Evil/Dear Prudence," it marked the end of a year-long saga.

"It was a nightmare," said Gee. "We were told that the process would take four months."

The records were to be pressed in Europe, where the bulk of the plants still exist. When it became apparent that the records would not be ready on time, the project was sent to a Canadian plant. The band was told that the product would be of higher quality and delivered sooner than the European plants had promised. When the test pressings arrived from Canada, the band was in for a surprise.

"They were awful," says Gee.

Christmas was approaching and indie orders were being pushed back to make way for major-label orders. Due to the band's dissatisfaction with the Canadian plant's product, the manufacturing company moved the project to a Los Angeles-based plant. The band was told that they would have their product in time for Record Store Day in April—eight months after the original delivery date. It was not meant to be. Says Gee, "We were pushed back again, because the plants were giving priority to the big names who were putting in their Record Store Day orders."

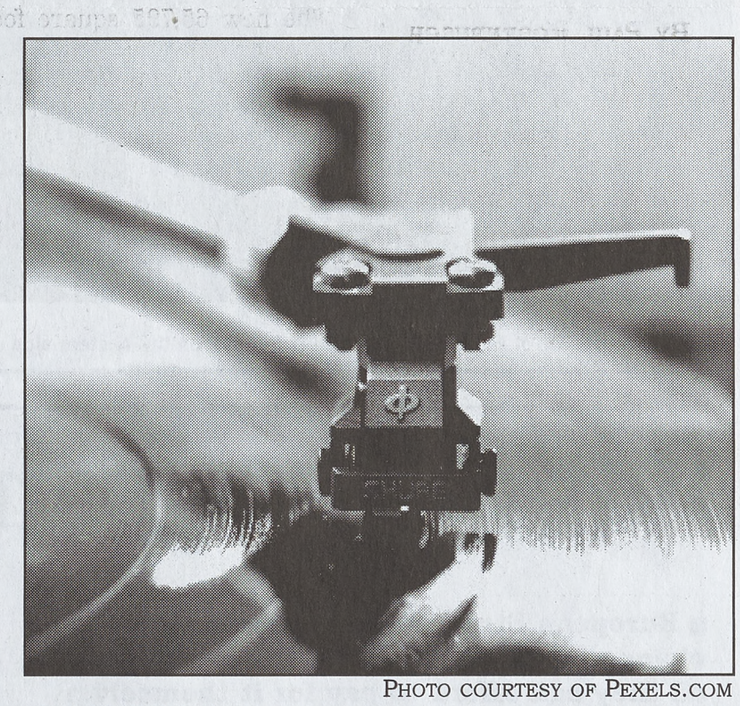


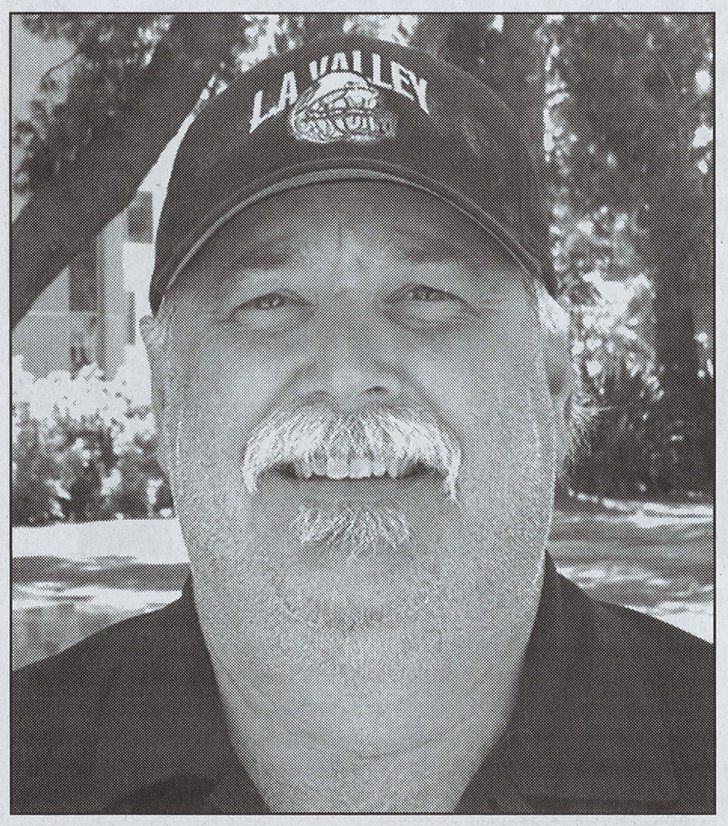
PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS.COM

VINYL RECORDS - Vinyl has seen a huge resurgence over the last decade.

Finally, on June 30, the shipment arrived- a year behind schedule. "We are thrilled that we finally have the single available," says Gee. "The long wait was not good, but we are happy with the end product. That said, we probably won't be doing any more vinyl for a long time."

Valley trainer Angelo Cimity passes

Longtime LAVC senior athletic trainer "The Godfather" passed away on September 27, 2016.



COURTESY OF DALE BECK

TRULY MISSED- Athletic trainer, Angelo Cimity, passes away at age 63.

BY JAMIE GARCIA
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Senior athletic trainer Angelo Cimity passed away at the age of 63 on September 27, 2016.

It was an early Thursday morning when Cimity began to experience chest pains. His eldest son, Nick Cimity, and wife, Barbara Cimity, called 911. Paramedics came to Cimity's house where they spent around 35 minutes trying to revive him. It was later found that his cause of death was a blood clot. A memorial service was held for him at Pierce Brothers in Westlake Village on October 14.

"It was great," Lu Grella, the LAVC athletic secretary and friend of Cimity, said of the memorial. "It was really... you know, not a lot of people talked but it was nice and sweet. He was also an amazing father, amazing husband, amazing friend, and coworker."

Having worked at Valley for 30 plus years as an athletic trainer, many of his friends and colleagues have said that he was a very hardworking man who truly loved his job and cared for the athletes very much. He made the tough calls when he needed to but it was all to benefit the athletes. His job as an athletic trainer was dealing with the athletes' insurance and making sure that the athletes were recovering well so they could participate in future games. Cimity was very protective of the athletes.

"His bedside manner was such that he came right at the problem," said Dale Beck, a former sports information director who was a close friend of Cimity.

Cimity really enjoyed attending aircraft shows with Beck and also enjoyed cooking Italian food. Cimity had two sides to him, he was very serious about his work but with friends he could go on for hours and tell you stories about his time in college or how he served in the army. He enjoyed cooking so much that during Christmas time he would give his friends homemade pasta sauce.

Dennis Mestas, who is also an athletic trainer at Los Angeles Valley College, worked with Cimity since 2008. They were good friends and colleagues. Cimity was known as 'The Godfather" around the training room. Cimity did a lot for the athletic training program throughout his 30 plus years, he built the program and he was also a part of a number of committees. Cimity was also a part of helping build the Monarch Athletics Center. Cimity was a pillar of Los Angeles Valley College.

"He was a California Community College Athletic Trainer legend," Mestas said.

VALLEY LIFE

Work-study programs help pay for college

■ **Federal work-study program offers on-campus employment opportunities for students from low income families.**

PHOTOGRAPH / JOSEPH MARTINEZ

- The last remnants of the old campus lie in disrepair on the eastern side of campus.

BY BRENDA SALDANA
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The federal work study program helps about 128,000 students on about 3,300 college campuses by offering them financial support and part-time employment while enrolled in school.

Many college campuses, including Valley College, find the Federal Work Program beneficial for retaining students and encouraging them to be successful, while also allowing them to explore their social communications skills to enhance interest in their own communities. In order to be a part of the program, the student must complete their (FAFSA) Financial Aid application letting them know of their interest in the work-study program. Idealy students would submit the application ahead of time for a better chance to gain entry into the progrm.

Alla Airapetyan, a work-study student in her third year at LAVC, said she just started in the program this fall but has applied since her first semester.

When asked about rating the program from 1 to 10 she said immediately, "10, because it helps students to pay for their needs and also so you get more experience."

The student's earnings in the program are at least minimum wage. The student must also only work a maximum of 20 hours per week, considering the student's schedule and academic progress, as they must also be enrolled full-time. The jobs are normally on campus, although there are some off campus as well. Even if the student has been granted a slot in the program, it does not mean the student will automatically be hired because the interview process counts as well- just like at any regular job. Colleges that request the FWS program, by law, must spend a certain percentage of the money on hiring students for community service.

The objective is to grant the student a chance in the work-study program if their household income is low. Therefore, this provides the students with economic help and gets them active in their campuses. Also, it ensures The Board of Directors Corporation for National and Community Service that the money is being used usefully.

The Board of Directors Corporation for National and Community Service are in charge of the distribution of funds for each campus. According to their official website, LAVC has received $230,666 for the FWS program.

Carlos Moreno, a student worker in the counseling office at LAVC, said, "Student workers, interns, and counselors try our very best to accommodate all the issues and concerns of students of all ages and backgrounds." He also thinks it is not easy to work in the counseling office given that there is so much demand from students.

LAVC hires in the financial aid office, the library, the counseling office, the cafeteria, and at the bookstore. For more information about the program, visit the Financial Aid Programs section on the LAVC site, or call (818)947-2412.

Valley program carries students to France

■ **European Studies Association proffers a chance for students to see the world, provided they can afford to pay for it themselves.**

BY GUADALUPE CASTRO
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The Los Angeles Valley College Study Away Program offers students the opportunity to study abroad during the summer or winter sessions at any destination around the world.

The study away program is instruction that takes place at an off-campus location- domestic or international- for a minimum of two weeks but no longer than six weeks. Destinations range from the U.S. to European, Asian, South American, African and Australian countries.

LAVC students have the options to study political science in Washington D.C., health sciences in Ghana, marine biology in Hawaii, or music in Austria, amongst many more.

"I would like to study abroad; specifically, as a political science student I would love studying somewhere like Washington D.C and gain experience in a place known for their politics," said LAVC student Lou Capistrano.

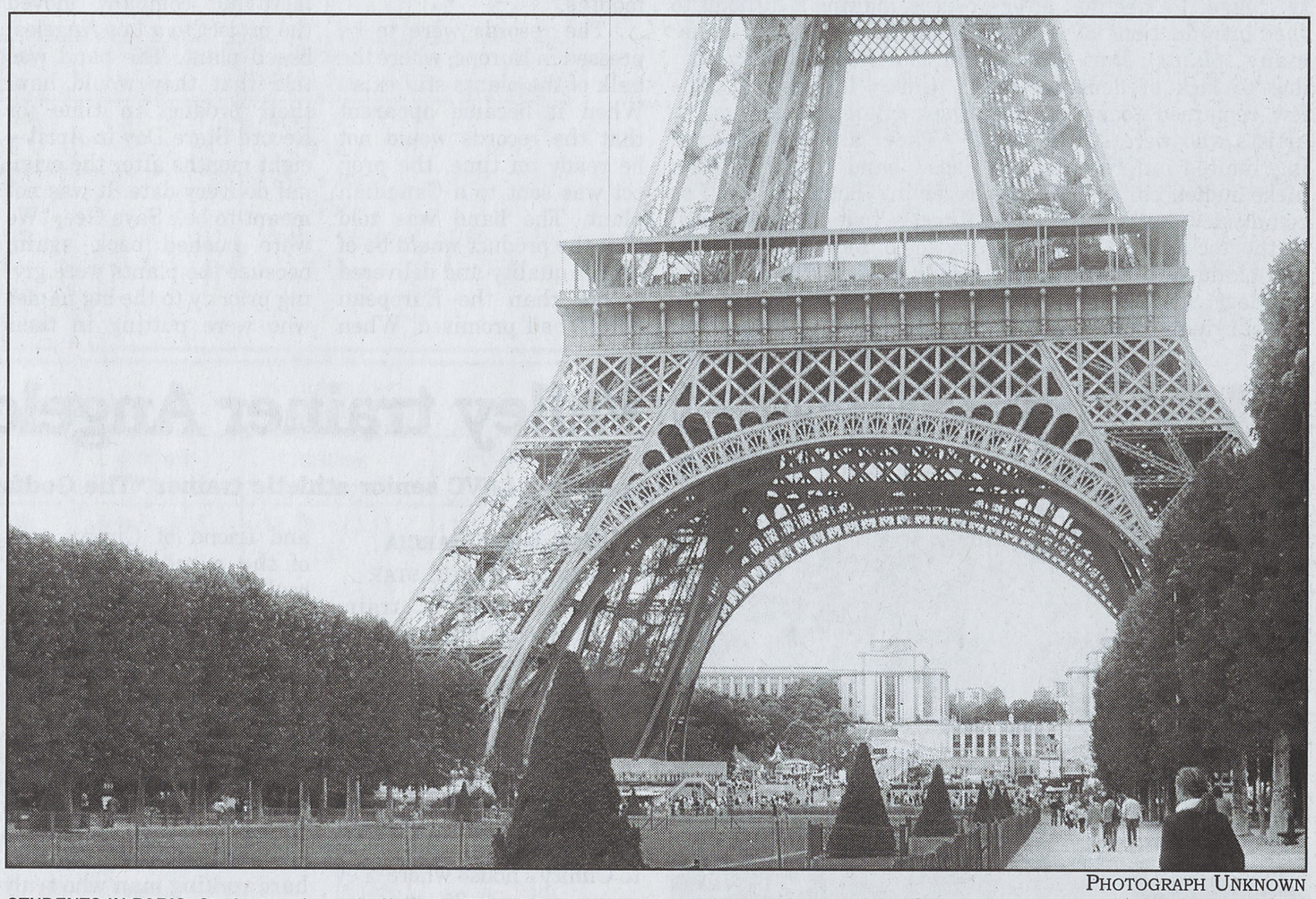
What prevents many students from taking advantage of these programs is money. Financial aid does not cover these expenses.

"As a college student I don't have the money to pay for such program and the study away program that LAVC offers should be much more accessible and affordable for students," said Child Development student Cristina Valencia.

Study Away Programs range from $3,000 to $5,000 depending on how long the trip is, where the destination is and if it covers the essentials like food, transportation, room and board.

Registration has currently opened for students interested in Summer Study in Paris 2017.

The Summer Study in Paris 2017 trip will last from July 1 to July 30. This trip is part of the Foreign Language Department at LAVC and will allow students to study French. Classes at all levels from beginner to advanced will be offered in either the Institut Catholique de Paris or ESA's Survival French Program.



PHOTOGRAPH UNKNOWN

STUDENTS IN PARIS- Students, who can afford it, will be able to see paris in the upcoming semesters.

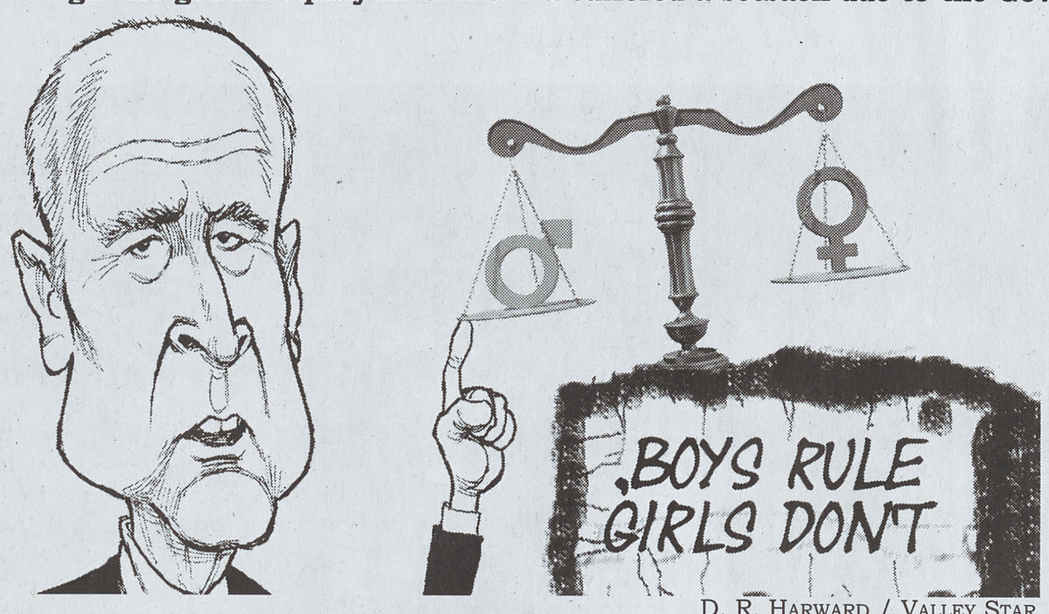
Students will be residing in central-Paris dorms or with families. An unlimited bus and metro pass will be issued so the students can freely explore the Paris region. Tours will also be included, and students will have access to museums, castles, the opera and other cultural and traditional customs known to Paris.

For more information about Summer Study in Paris 2017, visit the LAVC website. Dates of upcoming information sessions are currently posted and contact information is also provided. Future trips will also be posted on the LAVC website as soon as they become available.

OPINION

Governor vetos gender equality in favor of revenues

■ **The fight for gender equity in California suffered a setback due to the Governor Jerry Browns' veto of the Tampon Tax Repeal bill.**



D. R. HARWARD / VALLEY STAR

A SMALL THING- Brown tips the scales of fairness in the wrong direction.

BY D.R. HARWARD
STAFF WRITER

Despite the advances over the last 100 years towards ensuring the equitable treatment of Americans, the fight for gender equality continues to suffer exasperating setbacks. As you read this, women are paid less for the same work and are charged more for the fundamentally same item or service. In a recent article for Vogue magazine, Patricia Garcia pointed out that " personal care products marketed to women cost an average of 13 percent more than those marketed to men." She also points out that, on average, women earn only 79 cents to every dollar made by men.

A particularly pervasive example of the cost inequities suffered by women is sales tax on feminine hygiene products. Items like tampons and menstrual pads that are purchased and used almost exclusively by women, whom therefore also bear the sales tax burden—exclusively. Some, particularly males, might think ; Exclusively? What is the big deal? Some things are bought by only men, so those taxes paid balances out. Right?

Wrong. In fact, just the opposite is true; girls pay all the tax on girls only stuff and boys don't pay any tax on boys only stuff. Consider the most common equivalent, gender-exclusive products purchased by men--items like Viagra and Rogaine, for example—they are actually exempt from sales tax in almost every state.

In Sacramento, both houses unanimously passed the Tampon Tax Relief bill . Reuters reports that the efforts to get the tax repealed are part of a widespread bipartisan effort to end the disparity. Thus far, the movement has been successful in six other states; New York, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and New Jersey.

However, the unusual legislative unanimity was completely disregarded by Governor Jerry Brown, as he vetoed the bill, the Washington Post reported. Brown cited lost revenues and untimeliness as his reasons for vetoing the bill , which was co-authored by state assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D) and state senator Lin Lin Ghang (R).

"Tax breaks are the same as new spending--they both cost the General Fund money." stated Brown in his veto message. He went on to say that the bill "creates a new tax break or expands an existing tax break."

The recent awareness of this disparity and the concerted activities recently undertaken by lawmakers to correct it in the U.S. can be traced to an unlikely source; Ingrid Nilsen, an amature vlogger on Youtube.. The teenaged Nilsen broached the issue with President Barack Obama during a live interview streamed on the popular video-sharing website. Obama responded that he had "no idea" that such items were considered a luxury and said that he suspected that taxes were imposed on menstrual items because "men were making the laws when those taxes were passed."

The issue is not confined to America; nearly every country in the world has a version of sales tax, and most tax tampons—unfairly. For example, in the Netherlands tampons are taxed at 8 percent--the luxury item rate—but other household items, such as toilet paper, are taxed at only 2,5 percent.

On July 1, 2015 Canada halted sales tax on all feminine hygiene products, and France recently lowered the tax on tampons and pads from 20 percent down to 5.5 percent. At the turn of the century, the UK reduced the Value Added Tax ("VAT") from 17.5 percent to 5 percent, which is the lowest rate that the tax can be reduced to on such items under EU rules.

Due to the way the EU implemented the union-wide VAT system, feminine hygiene supplies face wildly varying tax percentages depending on where the purchase is made. The tax on Kotex in Hungary is 27 percent; in Denmark, Sweden and Norway it is 25 percent. Public Radio International ("PRI") stated that campaigners are petitioning to reduce the 22 percent tampon tax in Italy and Germany. Ireland is the only EU nation that does not tax the sale of such products, however along with Jamaica, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Tanzania and Lebanon--which also offer sales-tax free tampons--tariffs remain on imported brands.

According to PRI, Kenya is the only country that has eliminated both VATs and import duties from feminine sanitary items. Kenyan society has deemed such products to be essential and provides them free to the poor and underprivileged.

Back here in California there is still work to be done if we don't want to find ourselves waking up one day and discovering that the better half of Californian society has moved to Kenya . We cannot continue to stand on the sidelines and morosely shake our heads in silence when the rich and powerful decree that money trumps equality--it does not. Brown's worry about lost revenues are completely unfounded because California currently has a surplus of funds, over and above the emergency savings money put away in the state 'rainy day fund'.

If you are a woman or are friends with at least one woman--you are urged to call or text your state legislators and demand that they override the Governor's veto of AB 1561. If we each take a few minutes to text just one senator or assembly person today, tomorrow we will wake up in a world that gives our daughters the same opportunities that are available to our sons.

The Valley Star

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No, you may not touch my hair

■ **Solange Knowles and Phoebe Robinson express the disdain black women receive about their hair.**

BY KITIANA ADAMS
STAFF WRITER

Black women have been dismissed because of European standards for decades, feeling demonized about their natural features with hair being a targeted feature but Solange Knowles along with Phoebe Robinson, have used their unique platforms to remind society that the twists and cornrows of an Afro-American woman is not for white commentary nor entertainment.

Throughout the Afro-centric indie artist's third studio released album, A Seat at The Table, Knowles expresses the issues that the black community may have with the country's tumultuous connection to black culture and one of those issues pertains to hair. The beginning of the pre-hook to the ninth track, Don't Touch My Hair, is "they don't understand what it means to me," expressing how hair for African-Americans is more than what meets the eye. Hair is an extension of their being, pride, heritage, feeling, and emotion but most importantly, their self-identity.

"I think that one of the things that I'm also trying to communicate through the song is the way that people see us through our hair," Knowles said on her website, Saint Heron.

Knowles' soulful anthem from her album was accompanied with a retro, take you back to "hot-combs and Blue Magic" visual that gave viewers a taste of the true meaning behind her strong lyrics. In every shot everyone is in groups showcasing a variety of hairstyles. She goes through a timeline of hairstyles that were and are still prevalent in black culture today such as Marcel waves, brushed-out curls, crowns of looped braids, and Afros.

While Knowles shared her inner feelings through a musical track, Phoebe Robinson, a young stand-up and podcast comedian, shared her experiences of micro aggression, in her new book titled You Can't Touch My Hair: And Other Things I Still Have To Explain. In Robinson's book, that debuted on October 4th, 2016, she explains the "National Geographicesque" tones that black women have grown frustrated with--the groping and marveling that white women are guilty of doing, going on about how different the texture of a black woman's hair feels than what they expected. A trip to a supermarket can quickly turn into a seminar about the history of black hair.

The insults that black women receive, when it comes to hair, are easily masked as a compliment or admiration. Letting your anxious fingers travel through a black woman's kinks and curls because it's something that feels and looks "different" isn't admiration, it's a human freak show for the one who's on the outside of the cage--we're not animals, we're human like everyone else.

"Nope. You can't touch my hair. Even if my hair catches on fire, do not come to my rescue; just let me do a Michael Jackson move to put the blaze out," Robinson said.

SPORTS

Some Monarch players come a long way

■ **Champion Monarch football players endure personal hardships while making thier way to the the top of thier game.**

BY EMIL CLAES
STAFF WRITER

Defensive end Dillon Knight begins the day at 4 a.m. when he reluctantly rolls out of bed, splashes some water on his face and grabs a bite to eat. He leaves his home in Palmdale, California before 6 A.M. to ensure that he won't be late to football practice, almost 60 miles away in Valley Glen. Knight drives over 100 miles per day and in doing so he spends almost all of his day trapped behind the wheel and stuck in traffic.

Cornerback Donzale Roddie also starts his day at a time when many Monarchs are still fast asleep, waking up at around 5 A.M. to ensure that his daily commute from Compton to Valley Glen will get him there on-time for the morning practice. Although he drives almost 80 miles and through some of the worst traffic in the nation, nevertheless he is almost always bright-eyed, bushy-tailed and ready to lend a hand where he sees that one is needed.

Michael Sewell, Jr. (Safety) was apprehensive about taking part in the bone marrow donor drive held recently on campus. He was not worried about his personal discomfort should he be selected, rather he was concerned about not being a match. He was very invested in maximizing the possibility of saving someone's' life and dismissed any discomfort or hardship he might experience while doing so.

Wide receiver Ahkil Crumpton may have an only fifteen-minute drive to campus, but he is a long way from home. A superstar at West Catholic High in Philadelphia, Crumpton led his team to win their eighth-straight title and was named as one of the top five college prospects in his league. But, Crumpton pulled up his roots, walked away from his college prospects and moved across the country to become a Monarch. At Valley he says that he found a second family and a home.

The Star sat down and spoke with Crumpton, Sewell, Roddie and Knight to get some insight on how they got to the top of their league.

Why do you attend Valley College?

"I feel like it is a family here," said Dillon Knight "When I first came here I went to all the junior colleges in the area,but I felt a real connection with Valley."

"Coming from Compton, it is a great opportunity for me," said Donzale Roddie, "It's a great school and coach Tucker runs a great defensive game."

"We are really like family on the team," added Michael Sewell, Jr. "we all work for each other, we all work together and are with each other every day--we expect the person next to us to work as hard as we do, so we push each other to keep (being) motivated."

"I see every one here more than my real family" confessed Knight as the others nodded in agreement.

"Back home (in Philadelphia, PA) there are not too many good CC's," explained Akhil Crumpton, "California has the best community college system, so I decided I want to go to school out here." He initially attended Pierce College in Woodland Hills but soon migrated to Valley because it was a "better fit."

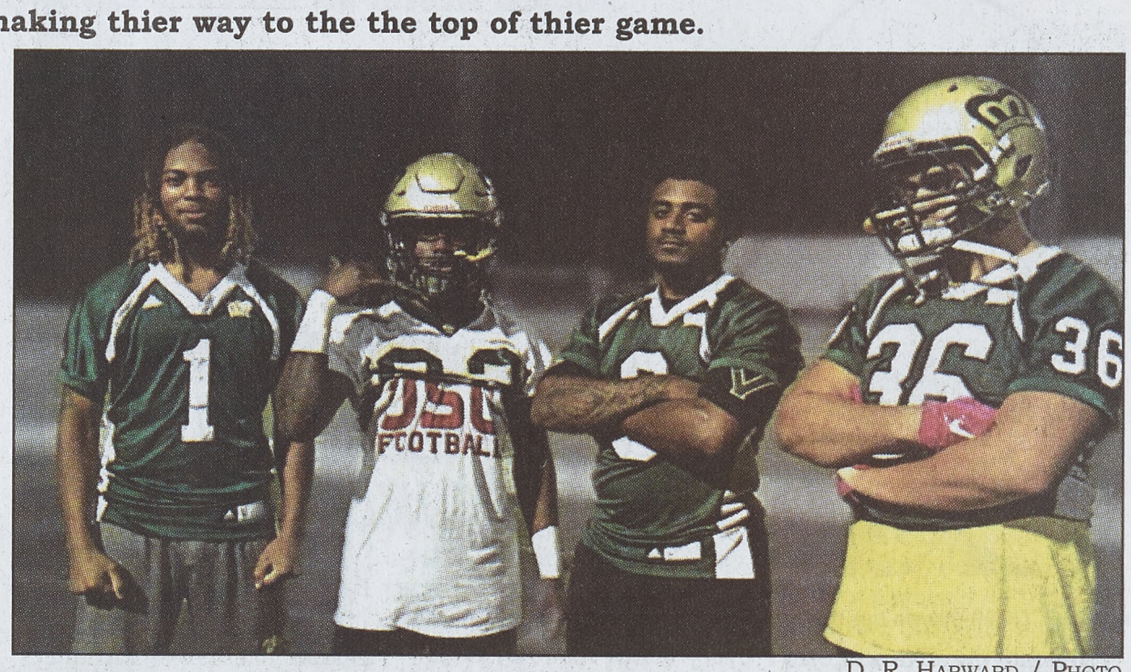
What is the end-game for student athletes at a community college?

"To transfer to a Division One college," said Sewell, "Coaches love winners, so I will be transferring soon."

"And from there go pro,' interjected Crumpton.

Sewell, Roddie and Crumpton are all enjoying their second year in the Monarch football program, which was also phenomenally successful last year, with nine wins to only one loss.

Sports seems to be the last bastion of superstition with their attendant good-luck rituals, are there any such activities taking place in the locker rooms at Valley?



D. R. HARWARD / PHOTO

- The village calls him "Cripple Billy," but Joshua Equivel's character isn't bound there.

Three of the four players said, "Spaghetti" almost simultaneously--the other added, "Well, it is kind of spaghetti-like."

Sewell said, "It's our pre-game ritual. Every Saturday we eat spaghetti--and then we win."

In a subsequent interview Head Football Coach Tucker explained that there was no magic involved, he said, "There's no magic involved, you have to get something in you--to fuel up before the game--and spaghetti works well because almost everyone likes spaghetti." While the coach downplays their pre-game nosh, the fact that there is a nosh at all demonstrates an unusually high commitment to the well-being of the students under his care.

What advice would you give to a younger sibling about attending college?

"LA Valley is a great opportunity to come up and become a Division 1 player," said Sewell "Here you can develop your game, get better and learn how to really play football. Valley College just lets you excel, if you want to." He went on to say that he has recently encouraged two of his cousins to enroll at Valley.

"Don't be late!" they all said. "Whatever you do don't be late," added Crumpton. Despite repeated requests none would elaborate on what happened to football players who were late.

At the conclusion of the interview Crumpton uttered a sentiment that his teammates affirmed, he said "AGGG--All Glory Goes to God."

Amen.

With a perfect 11-0 record, the California Community College Athletics Association American Division Champions know a thing or two about focused endeavors and consistent engagement. The Valley Star spoke with a few of the key players on the team, seeking to discover the secret behind their successful season, which was capped Saturday with a 24-16 victory over the SouthWestern Panthers.

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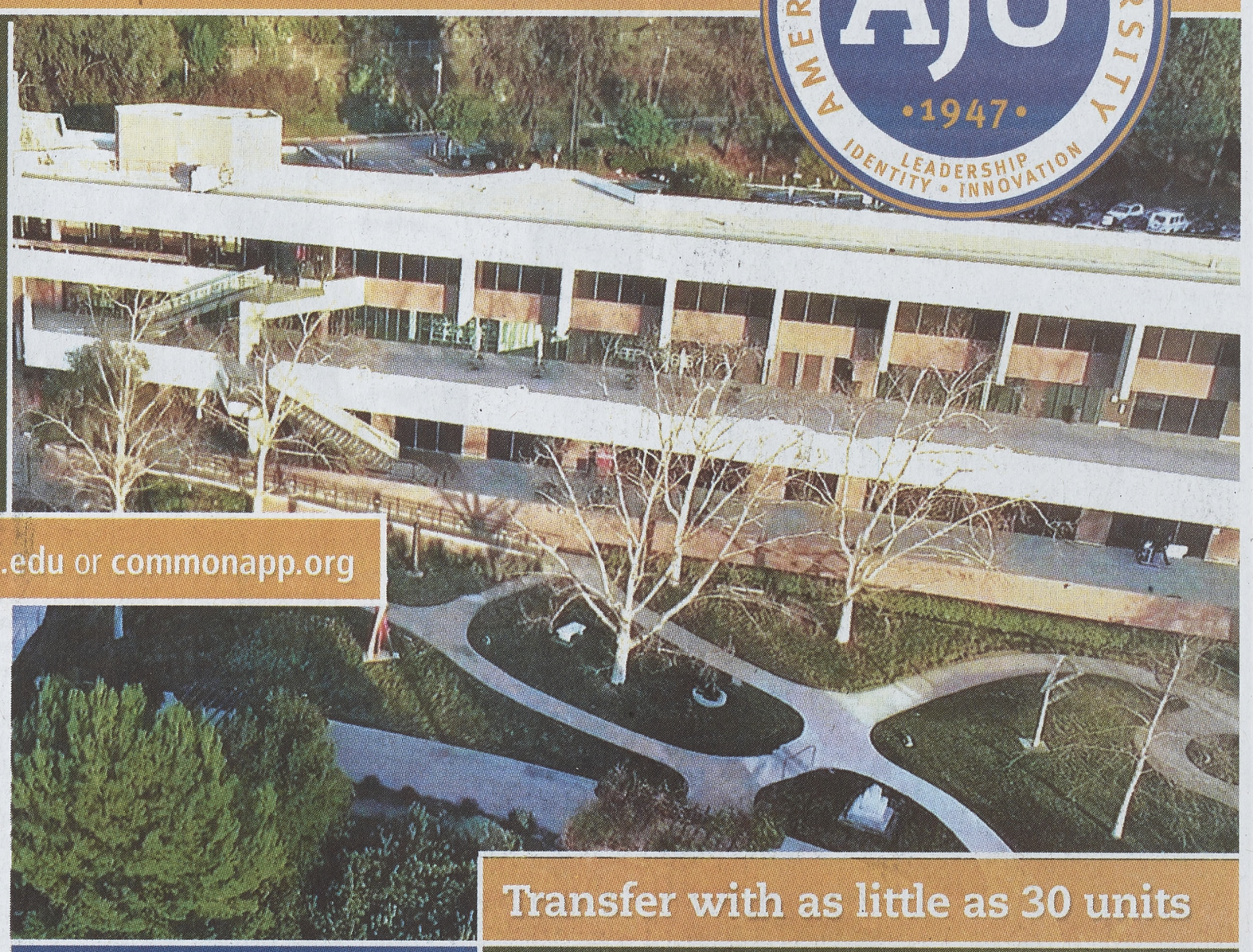

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